

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3712

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 1506

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, BG, IN

SUBJ: SHARP GOI REACTION TO BANGALEE CHARGES

REF: (A) DACCA 0570, (B) DACCA 0571

1. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON JANUARY 30 CATEGORICALLY DENIED ALLEGATIONS THAT INDIA IS PROVIDING ARMS, TRAINING OR FUNDS TO "MISCREANTS IN BANGLADESH". THE OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN OF THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SAID THAT THE ATTEMPT TO REVIVE ANTI-INDIAN FEELING (IN BANGLADESH) IS PARTICULARLY REGRETTABLE IN VIEW OF THE UNDERSTANDING REACHED DURING THE SATTAR DELEGATION VISIT. THE GOI, HE CONTINUED, IS LED TO THE CONCLUSION THAT ALLEGATIONS OF INDIAN INVOLVEMENT ARE MADE FOR REASONS OF DOMESTIC COMPULSION OR SOME OTHER REASON. THE TEXT OF THE MEA STATEMENT FOLLOWS:

"THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ARE SURPRISED AND PAINED AT THE RENEWED OUTBURSTS OF ANTI-INDIA PROPAGANDA IN THE BANGLADESH PRESS. IT APPEARS THAT THE EARLIER STORIES OF INDIAN TROOP CONCENTRATIONS AND INTERVENTION THREATS HAVING FAILED TO CARRY CONVICTION, NEW ONES ARE BEING CONCOCTED, THE LATEST BEING THAT INDIA IS BEHIND THE ACTIVITY OF SOME STRAY
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BANDS OF MISCREANTS IN A SMALL PART OF A DISTRICT OF

BANGLADESH.

"THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WISH TO STATE CATEGORICALLY THAT ALLEGATIONS THAT INDIA IS PROVIDING ARMS, TRAINING, FUNDS OR SANCTUARY TO SUCH MISCREANTS ARE UTTERLY FALSE AND BASELESS. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S OFFER TO BANGLADESH TO SEND ITS OWN REPRESENTATIVES TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES WHETHER THERE IS ANY UNUSUAL MILITARY ACTIVITY ON THE INDIAN SIDE OF THE BORDER REMAINS OPEN. IT IS A PROOF OF INDIA'S FRIENDLY ATTITUDE THAT IT HAS CONTINUED TO PROVIDE TRAINING TO HUNDREDS OF BANGLADESH MILITARY PERSONNEL.

"INDIA DESIRES A PEACEFUL BORDER AND A STRONG, STABLE AND PROSPEROUS BANGLADESH BECAUSE THIS IS IN INDIA'S OWN INTEREST AND CONSISTENT WITH INDIA'S POLICY OF WORKING FOR A STRUCTURE OF DURABLE PEACE AND COOPERATION ON THE SUB-CONTINENT.

"THE ATTEMPT TO REVIVE ANTI-INDIAN FEELING IS PARTICULARLY REGRETTABLE IN VIEW OF THE UNDERSTANDING REACHED DURING THE RECENT VISIT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION FROM BANGLADESH LED BY MR. JUSTICE A. SATTAR WHEN BOTH SIDES AGREED TO REFRAIN FROM HOSTILE PROPAGANDA AND TO WORK FOR PROMOTION OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION IN THE INTERESTS OF THE PROGRESS AND WELL-BEING OF THEIR PEOPLES.

"THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ARE LED TO THE INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION THAT ALLEGATIONS OF INDIAN INVOLVEMENT ARE BEING MADE OUT OF DOMESTIC COMPULSIONS OR SOME OTHER REASON."

2. MEA JOINT SECRETARY AJAMANI (BANGLADESH) SAID NOTHING ABOUT THIS MATTER, OR ANY PROTESTS THE GOI MIGHT HAVE RECEIVED, DURING A CALL ON JANUARY 28 BY INS DIRECTOR DENNIS JUX AND THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR. IN CONTRAST TO HIS USUAL ALARMIST ATTITUDE, AJMANI WAS IN FACT RESTRAINED.

3. ALL NEW DELHI NEWSPAPERS HAVE PROMINENT FRONT PAGE PLAY TO THE MEA STATEMENT. A RELATED ITEM, REPORTING THAT DEPUTY MINISTER BIPIN PAL DAS SAID THE GOI HAS RECEIVED NO OFFICIAL INFORMATION FROM THE BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT REGARDING THE IDENTITY AND PARTICULARS OF THE ASSAILANTS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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THE INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN DACCA, WAS CARRIED IN THE INSIDE PAGES. IN A CURIOUS FORMULATION, DAS, WHO WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION IN THE RAJYA SABHA, SAID THAT IT WAS "EVIDENTLY BECAUSE INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE WHOLE INCIDENT ARE STILL IN PROGRESS". THE DEPUTY MINISTER ADDED, "HOWEVER, THE BANGLADESH POLICE HAVE IDENTIFIED ALL SIX ASSAILANTS, FOUR OF WHOM WERE FILLED AND TWO ARRESTED".

4. COMMENT: THE PRESS ACCOUNTS IN DACCA, AS CORRECTLY
SURMISED IN THE REFTELS, PROMPTLY GOADED THE INDIAN
RESPONSE. WE HAVE SEEN NOTHING IN THE INDIAN PRESS IN THE
LAST FEW WEEKS WHICH COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AS "UNFAVORABLE
TO BANGLADESH AND CALCULATED TO KEEP TENSIONS UP". THERE
MAY CONCEIVABLY HAVE BEEN ISOLATED PIECES IN THE UPI
VERNACULAR PRESS IN CALCUTTA BUT NOTHING TO WARRANT
TABARAK HUSAIN'S COMMENTS TO CONGRESSMAN DIGGS (REF A).
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